distinguish over the art of record. Claims 1, 7, 9, and 10 are in independent form. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

The Office Action rejected Claims 1, 2, 4, and 6-9 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,046,820 (Konishi), and Claims 3 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Konishi '820* in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,950,036 (Konishi).

As shown above, Applicant has amended independent Claims 1, 7, and 9 in terms that still more clearly define what Applicant regards as his invention. Applicant submits that these amended independent claims and new independent Claim 10, together with the remaining claims dependent thereon, are patentably distinct from the cited prior art for at least the following reasons.

The aspect of the present invention set forth in Claim 1 is an image processing method for matching the color reproduction nature of each of a plurality of output apparatuses in accordance with color reproducing characteristics of a reference output apparatus (which may for example be a printer). The image processing method of Claim 1 comprises inputting output characteristics data corresponding to each of a plurality of output apparatuses that output an image, including the reference output apparatus, and calculating correction data corresponding to the other output apparatus on the basis of the output characteristics data of the reference output apparatus and the output characteristics data of the other output apparatuses. Also, according to Claim 1, the calculated correction data corresponding to each of the output apparatuses are managed, and the correction data corresponding to the other output apparatuses is revised on the basis of the revised output characteristics data of the reference output apparatus.

One important feature of the method of Claim 1 is matching the color reproduction nature of a plurality of output apparatuses that output an image. This is accomplished by managing the correction data corresponding to each of the output apparatuses, whereby the density correction value in the density correction table of each printer is revised so that the actual density value of each printer is equal to the actual density value of the reference printer on the basis of the density correction table of the reference printer (this is illustrated, for example, in Figure 5, Step 11; it is to be understood, of course, that the claims are not limited by the details of this Figure).

Konishi '820 relates to an information processing apparatus, an image output apparatus, a method of controlling the same, and an image forming system. In the *Konishi '820* system, upon a calibration request from a printer, a computer supplies the printer with logical density values for a grayscale correction. On the basis of the grayscale correction data, the printer forms a sample image, measures the actual density values of the sample image and notifies the computer of the actual density values. Based on the logical density values and actual density values, the computer creates a grayscale correction table, serving as a rule for correcting the tonality of image information. When printing is performed, the computer corrects the tonality of the image information based upon the grayscale correction table and supplies the corrected results to the printer.

The *Konishi '820* system generates a grayscale correction table upon a calibration request from a printer. Therefore, the case can occur that in a system constituted by a plurality of devices (column 7, lines 44-47), matching the color reproduction nature of the output apparatuses may not be possible unless all output devices request calibration. In contrast, use of the method of Claim 1 ensures matching the color

reproduction nature of the output apparatuses because the density correction table of the output apparatuses is revised based on the input density value of the reference output apparatus, whether or not a calibration request has been issued for the reference apparatus or for the other output apparatuses connected to the reference printer (Figure 5, Step 11). Applicant submits that nothing in *Konishi '820* would teach or suggest forming correction data corresponding for other output apparatus on the basis of the output characteristics data of a reference output apparatus. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claim 1 is clearly allowable over *Konishi '820*.

Independent Claims 7, 9, and 10are memory medium, apparatus and computer-program claims respectively corresponding to method Claim 1, and are believed to be patentable for at least the same reasons as discussed above in connection with Claim 1.

The other claims in this application depend from one or the other of independent Claims 1 and 7discussed above, and, therefore, are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, individual reconsideration of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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NY_MAIN 221863 v 1

MARKED-UP VERSION OF CLAIMS SHOWING CHANGES TO CLAIMS

1. (Amended) An image processing method comprising the steps of:

inputting output characteristics data corresponding to each of a plurality of output apparatuses that output an image, including a reference output apparatus; [and]

[forming] calculating correction data corresponding to the other output apparatus on the basis of the output characteristics data of [said] the reference output apparatus and the output characteristics data of [said] the other output apparatus; and

managing the calculated correction data corresponding to each of the output apparatuses,

wherein, in association with a [revise] revision of [said] the output characteristics data of [said] the reference output apparatus, [said] the correction data corresponding to the other output apparatus is revised on the basis of [said] the revised output characteristics data of [said] the reference output apparatus.

7. (Amended) An image processing apparatus which can communicate to a plurality of output apparatuses that output an image, including a reference output apparatus, said image processing apparatus comprising:

a correction [processing means for performing] processor, adapted to calculate a correcting process to image data by using correction data according to the output apparatus;

an input [means for] unit, adapted to input[ting] output characteristics data of each output apparatus [from] of said plurality of output apparatuses that output an image, including [said] the reference output apparatus; [and]

a management unit, adapted to manage the calculated correction data corresponding to each of the output apparatuses; and

[revising means for revising said] a revision unit, adapted to revise the correction data corresponding to [said] the other output apparatus on the basis of the output characteristics data of [said] the reference output apparatus and the output characteristics data of [said] the other output apparatus.

9. (Amended) A memory medium in which a program for an image processing method has been stored, wherein said program comprises the steps of:

inputting output characteristics data corresponding to each of a plurality of output apparatuses that output an image, including a reference output apparatus; [and]

[forming] calculating correction data corresponding to the other output apparatus on the basis of the output characteristics data of [said] the reference output apparatus and the output characteristics data of [said] the other output apparatus; and

managing the calculated correction data corresponding to each of the output apparatuses,

wherein, in association with a [revise] revision of [said] the output characteristics data of [said] the reference output apparatus, [said] the correction data

corresponding to the other output apparatus is revised on the basis of [said] the revised output characteristics data of [said] the reference output apparatus.

NY_MAIN 221915 v 2